

HOW THE CONFEDERATE ARMY WAS VACCINATED

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In the fall of 1863, during the late war between the States, I was sent for by Surgeon-General S. P. Moore and told that smallpox was assuming alarming proportions in the Confederate Army and that he wished me to secure enough vaccine virus to vaccinate all the soldiers, and this done very speedily. He offered to place at my disposal as many surgeons as I deemed necessary. I asked him how many soldiers were to be vaccinated, and he told me about two hundred and fifty thousand—that is, the entire Confederate Army at that time.

I asked to have Dr. Russell Murdock report to me, which he did at once. I instructed him to start in at the western end of Richmond, and making a house-to-house visitation, to vaccinate all healthy children of healthy parents, while I myself did the same in the eastern end of the city. The children were vaccinated in six places on each arm, thus securing later twelve healthy vaccine crusts. It is of interest to note that in no instance did a mother refuse to have her child vaccinated when told that this was done to stop an epidemic of smallpox among the soldiers.

On the fourteenth day after vaccination, the crusts were collected, being then about to drop off. Not a single untoward case developed among the children. The crusts were wrapped in tin foil and distributed throughout the Army, with directions how to use them. All this was done in six weeks' time. The threatened epidemic was promptly and completely controlled. In no case was any other disease communicated by the vaccine. The takes were much quicker than with bovine virus, and the arms were nothing like as sore. The protection was at least as good.

Even up to the present time I occasionally see some man or woman with six faint scars on each arm, standing as a record of service rendered as an infant to the soldiers of the Confederate Army in 1863.

Discussion.—Dr. Wheeler said that to him the most interesting feature of the situation portrayed by Dr. Brock's paper was the willingness of the people to cooperate with the authorities in their efforts to prevent the spread of disease. Nowadays associations and societies are formed for no other purpose than to thwart such efforts, and no "ism" or fad is so absurd that an organization may not be formed for its support.

* Read before the American Public Health Association, Havana, Cuba, 1911.